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ABSTRACT

A sample of 462 student affairs professionals responded to a survey questionnaire designed to conceptualize a model institution of higher education committed to facilitating the development of the whole student. The respondents represented 74% of a randomly selected population sample drawn from the membership lists of ACPA, NASPA, and NAWDAC. The members of the sample responded to options within six institutional categories hypothesized by Chickering to effect the development of students: (1) clarity and consistency of objectives; (2) institutional size; (3) curriculum, teaching, and evaluation; (4) residence hall arrangements; (5) faculty and administration; and (6) friends, groups, and student culture. The selections were made from the perspective of which options would best facilitate the development of the whole person. Personal and demographic data about the respondents were coded and analyzed. A one-sample chi-square was computed on each item to determine if there was statistical significance in choice of response options. A two-sample chi-square was computed on each item within the six categories and compared with each question providing personal and demographic data. The purpose was to determine if the personal and demographic data significantly influenced the selection of response options. Results are reported in the form of a model. (Author)

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HIGHER EDUCATION AS STUDENT DEVELOPMENT: A CONCEPTUAL MODEL

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Four hundred sixty-two student affairs professionals responded to a survey questionnaire designed to conceptualize a model institution of higher education committed to facilitating the development of the whole student. The respondents represented 74 percent of a randomly selected population sample of 627 drawn from the membership lists of ACPA, NASPA, and NAWDAC.

The members of the sample responded to options within six institutional categories hypothesized by Chickering (1969) to effect the development of students: (1) clarity and consistency of objectives, (2) institutional size, (3) curriculum, teaching, and evaluation, (4) residence hall arrangements, (5) faculty and administration, and (6) friends, groups, and student culture. The selections were made from the perspective of which options would best facilitate the development of the whole person. Personal and demographic data about the respondents was also obtained.

The data gathered from the respondents was coded, entered onto computer sheets, and punched onto computer cards to be analyzed. A one-sample chi-square was computed on each item to determine if there was statistical significance in choice of response options. A two-sample chi-square was computed on each item within the six categories and compared with each question providing personal and demographic data. The purpose was to determine if the personal and demographic data significantly influenced the selection of response options.

An analysis of the data reveals the following model:

Clarity and Consistency of Objectives

Basic Approach

The primary mission of the model institution would be to provide students with opportunities to enhance freedom and responsibility, self-fulfillment and dignity ($p < .00001$). This mission would play a primary role in both the selection ($p < .0000$ and the evaluation ($p < .00001$) of faculty and institutional administrators. The mission would also serve as a primary criterion in the admission and graduation of students ($p < .00001$). In major policy decisions ($p < .00001$), and in the development and expansion of institutional functions ($p < .00001$), the mission of the college would be a primary criterion.

Variations

Male student personnel professionals saw the mission of the college as unimportant in the selection of administrators for employment ($p < .002$). To those in the North Central Region of the United States, the primary mission was not important in the evaulation of administrators ($p < .02$). This was not true of the New Englanders who considered the mission of primary importance in the evaluation of administrators ($p < .05$). Those under 30 years of age ($p < .02$), those with specialist's and doctorate degrees ($p < .02$) did not see the mission as important in the selection of students for admission. Those who had been in the field for less than five years saw the mission as unimportant in the evaluation of students ($p < .05$).

Those with specialist's and doctorate degrees also saw the primary mission as unimportant in the development and expansion of institutional functions ($p < .02$). Those trained in higher education administration apart from a counseling emphasis viewed the primary mission of the college as focusing on either cultivating reason,

improving societal life, or transmitting culture rather than focusing on the student ($p < .02$). Those who spent 50 percent of their time or less with students saw the primary mission of the college as cultivating the mind rather than giving attention to the direct goals and needs of the students ($p < .02$).

Institutional Size

Basic Approach

The enrollment of the model institution would not exceed 10,000 students ($p < .00001$). All classes would be designed for between ten and twenty students ($p < .00001$). The student/faculty ratio would be approximately 30/1 ($p < .00001$).

Variations

Those in the Northeastern Region of the country, and those with academic training in counseling viewed the optimal enrollment to be between 1200 and 3500 students ($p < .02$). Those primarily identified with ACPA did not see the size of the enrollment as an important variable ($p < .05$). Those who had been in the field for 25 or more years saw class size as an unimportant variable ($p < .02$).

Curriculum, Teaching, and Evaluation

Curriculum

Basic Approach. The curriculum at the model institution would be based on both theoretical principles and application for technical proficiency ($p < .00001$). The content of the curriculum would address primarily the cognitive domain of the student ($p < .00001$). The content and structure of the curriculum plus decisions about new curricular offerings would be based on the needs, interests, and goals of students as well as upon the primary mission of the college ($p < .00001$). Responsibility for determining a student's program of study would rest equally with the institution and the student ($p < .00001$).

Variations. Those professionals who were less than 30 years of age ($p < .05$) and those who were primarily identified with ACPA ($p < .05$) saw importance in the curriculum addressing the affective domain of students' development. Those who spent less than twenty percent of their time with students saw the requirements of society as primary in the development of new curricular offerings ($p < .02$). Those in the Northeastern Region of the country ($p < .01$) saw students as having primary responsibility for developing their program of study while males saw the institution as primarily responsible for a student's program of study ($p < .001$).

Instruction

Basic Approach. The primary method of instruction for the purpose of achieving mastery of academic content would utilize discussion seminars ($p < .00001$). Supervised practica would be used for acquisition of knowledge for technical proficiency ($p < .00001$).

Variations. Those with bachelor's degrees saw didactic/lecture presentations as the primary method to achieve mastery of academic content ($p < .05$).

Evaluation

Basic Approach. The primary method of reporting evaluations of student learning would be descriptive performance behavior statements ($p < .00001$). Students would contract for grades rather than take formal objective or subjective examinations ($p < .00001$). Responsibility for evaluating student learning would be jointly shared by students and instructors ($p < .00001$). Intellective factors would be the primary criterion for admission and academic performance would be the primary requirement for graduation ($p < .00001$).

Variations. Those fifty years of age and older, those who had been in the field for 25 or more years ($p < .01$), and those primarily identified with NASPA ($p < .05$) saw the traditional methods (objective and subjective examinations) as primary in student evaluation. Those who spent more than fifty percent of their time with students saw written and oral reports, papers, and projects (rather than formal examinations) as the primary method of evaluation ($p < .01$).

Male student personnel professionals ($p < .002$), those over thirty years of age ($p < .05$), and those who perceived their role as basically administrative ($p < .01$) saw the responsibility for evaluating student learning as resting with the instructor. Those who spent from forty to sixty percent of their time in direct contact with students concluded that the affective domain ought to be the primary focus for admission ($p < .01$).

Those less than forty years of age ($p < .02$), those with training in counseling and guidance ($p < .05$), and those primarily identified with ACPA ($p < .001$) viewed the primary requirement for graduation to be applied learned skills. Those trained in both counseling and student personnel administration saw affective development as the primary criterion for graduation ($p < .05$).

Residence Hall Arrangements

Basic Approach

The ideal college would assume responsibility for either making housing available for students or for being prepared to help students who need housing arrangements ($p < .00001$). No academic classifications would be required to live in campus residences ($p < .00001$).

Residence halls would be staffed with a combination of professionals and paraprofessionals ($p < .00001$). Residence hall rules and regulations would be jointly determined and implemented by the staff and the students ($p < .00001$).

Visitation by members of the opposite sex would be determined by residents in specific units or subunits ($p < .00001$). In like manner, residence hall occupancy according to sex would be any arrangement at the student's option ($p < .00001$). Furthermore, the wishes of the individual resident would be most important in the assigning of roommates ($p < .00001$).

Student government, programming, student services, and academic services in the residence halls would be encouraged by the hall staff ($p < .00001$). However, the options of the residents in various units or subunits would not be ignored ($p < .00001$)

The basic purpose of the residence halls would be to enhance personal growth and development through community living experiences ($p < .00001$). Opportunities for personal development would be made available for students in both on-campus and off-campus living centers ($p < .00001$).

Variations

Males concluded that it was necessary to require freshmen to live in campus residence halls ($p < .01$). The formulation of residence hall rules and regulations would rest with the administration and staff. Those with doctorates concluded that all residence hall staff ought to be professionally trained ($p < .01$).

Those in the Southern Region of the United States concluded that single-sex residence halls would best facilitate student development ($p < .001$). Those in the

age-range of forty to forty-nine years concluded that residence halls ought to have specified hours for visitation by members of the opposite sex ($p < .05$). Those in the field for less than five years ($p < .01$), those under age thirty, ($p < .02$), and those primarily identified with ACPA ($p < .01$) concluded that unlimited visitation best facilitated student development.

Those over forty years of age viewed residence hall occupancy according to sex to be either single-sex halls, or coed halls but with the sexes separated into specific areas of the residence ($p < .01$). Those with master's degrees would have roommate assignments structured by the administrative staff ($p < .04$). Those trained in higher education administration/student personnel would have either a random roommate assignment approach or a structured approach to accommodate interest groups ($p < .04$).

Both males ($p < .02$) and those with master's degrees ($p < .04$) would have student government and programming structured throughout the residence halls as opposed to allowing the residents options for either. Those primarily identified with NAWDAC concluded that academically oriented programs ought to be non-existent in residence halls ($p < .05$). Likewise, those who spent less than twenty percent of their time with students concluded that student services program offerings in the residence halls ought to be either wholly at the option of the residents or not afforded at all ($p < .05$).

Faculty and Administration

Basic Approach

The governance structure would be shared equally between administrators, faculty and students ($p < .00001$). Members of the faculty and administration would have joint appointments and would share responsibilities in both teaching and administration ($p < .0001$). Regularly scheduled in-service programs would be available for faculty and staff to increase abilities in facilitating the development of students ($p < .00001$).

To establish an effective and potent educational environment would be the primary focus of the administration ($p < .00001$). The administration, faculty, and students would share in policy decisions directly related to student life ($p < .00001$).

The primary responsibility of the faculty would be to establish a climate conductive to learning and discovery of new knowledge ($p < .00001$). Competency based merit evaluation would have top priority in determining rewards for both faculty and administrators ($p < .00001$).

The model college would take the initiative in encouraging increased faculty/student association ($p < .00001$). In so doing, faculty and staff would frequent areas of student traffic, such as cafeterias, dorms, and student centers ($p < .00001$).

The scope of the campus judicial process would include the personal, social, and academic behavior of students, administrators, and faculty ($p < .00001$). Responsibility for the functioning of the judicial system would also be equally shared ($p < .0000$[illegible])

Variations

Female student personnel professionals ($p < .05$) and those identified as primarily faculty ($p < .01$) concluded that members of the faculty and administration ought to serve in either a faculty position or an administrative post, but not both. Those with master's degrees saw working with programs and staff as the primary responsibility of administrators.

Those forty years of age or younger suggested that policy decisions in the area of student life should be left to the faculty and administration ($p < .002$). Those who perceived their roles as administrators considered evaluations received from superiors as primary for determination of administrator rewards ($p < .03$).

For those in the age range of fifty or older, "come any time" office hours were perceived as the primary procedure in facilitating accessibility to students ($p < .01$). Females would have the scope of the campus judicial system reduced so as not to include personal behavior ($p < .01$). Those primarily identified with NASPA saw the governance of the campus judicial process to lie basically with the college administration ($p < .02$).

Friends, Groups, and Student Culture

Basic Approach

The model college would take sufficient interest in student clubs, organizations, and groups to encourage their presence and development on campus ($p < .00001$). Special programs would be available to aid those students exhibiting below average academic competency ($p < .00001$).

The college would fulfill its responsibility to promote values by aiding students in individual value clarification ($p < .00001$). Cultural identity centers would be provided members of minority groups ($p < .0001$), and the college would take the initiative in encouraging students to confront differing life-styles, cultures, political views, and social structures ($p < .0001$).

Variations

Those who perceived their roles as other than administrator, counselor, or teacher ($p < .02$), and those who spent from eighty to one hundred percent of their time with students ($p < .01$) concluded that offering similar academic programs to all students was better for the model institution than offering remedial programs for the academically deficient. Those primarily identified with NASPA and NAWDAC concluded that guiding students in confronting differing values better fulfilled the college's responsibility to promote values than the other options offered ($p < .05$). Those fifty years of age and older ($p < .001$) and those in the field for twenty or more years ($p < .001$) did not see the college as having responsibility for providing cultural identity centers for minority students.

Implications

A number of implications can be drawn from the findings of the study which appear to have import to those concerned with the development of students within the context of higher education. Most of the implications suggest ideas and approaches which are quite different from what can be observed in many colleges and universities throughout the country. They particularly speak to the opportunities and responsibilities afforded college administrators, student personnel workers, preparation program personnel, and professional associations in facilitating the development of students.

1. Student personnel professionals made it clear that colleges and universities should be more student-centered than has been evidenced in the tradition of higher education. Not only was there concern that the mission of the institution be directed toward students, there was a strong implication that the students should be considered fellow-adults in the educational venture. Such a relationship has been highly recommended and frequently enforced by the courts as eighteen-year-olds have attained the age of majority.

This implication calls for new directions in many institutions of higher education, particularly those whose basic mission is directed toward goals other than facilitating the development of the whole student. The traditional purposes of higher education, such as instruction, research, and service should be re-evaluated in view of what each of these purposes can specifically contribute to the development of students. In order for this to be accomplished, new criteria need to be added to the qualifications of both administrators and faculty who are selected for employment Of primary importance in hiring college personnel is their interest in and committment to a student-centered approach to higher education.

The professional associations would do well (1) to "lobby" for those with training in counseling/student personnel to fill vacancies in major position of influence in higher education, and (2) to begin to develop standards for student personnel preparation and employment. The associations would also do well to strengthen their communications to central administrators and members of governing bodies in efforts to promote the student development approach to higher education.

2. An implication can also be drawn concerning the place of students in sharing a greater responsibility in the overall educational process. Why should students not assume greater responsibility for making choices and decisions which are directly related to their lives and future with a minimum of interference from the college or university? Institutional governance, conditions relative to residence living, and selection of programs of study could well be assumed by students as their share of the responsibility for the functioning of the academic community. Perhaps it is the responsibility of the institution to help students take on these responsibilities as part of the learning experience.

This implication suggests that members of the administration and faculty release their hold on the vestiges of "in loco parentis" and begin viewing students as colleagues and fellow-adults. This calls for sharing influences and privileges previously reserved primarily for faculty and administrators. This also calls for considerable understanding on the part of faculty and administrators. Students are not as skilled nor as experienced in decision-making and committee responsibilities as are the members of the faculty and administration. Therefore, if the institution is to fulfill its responsibility to students in areas of decision-making, just adding students to committees is inadequate. Seminars, skill-building groups, leadership training, and perhaps even academic courses should be designed to facilitate students' skills as they assume a greater responsibility in the life of the institution

This also calls for skills on the part of both student development specialists and students regarding how to effect change within the complicated and bureaucratic structures of the college and university. Student personnel preparation programs should include the development of change strategies and skills along with the ability to share such findings with others in the academic community as part of their educational goals.

3. Student affairs professionals also appear to be calling for greater institutional responsibility on the part of administrators and faculty. To be involved in both teaching and administration, to move from the traditional methods of teaching and evaluation, and to aid in developing an effective and potent educational environment requires much more thought and responsibility than merely resolving problems and working on programs. Rather the call for greater responsibility on the part of faculty and administrators includes continuing in-service programs in student development and a willingness to be responsible for, and subject to, the campus judicial process. In addition, the data implies that student affairs professionals are asking for faculty and administrators to take the initiative in developing relationships with students rather than leaving it primarily to student initiative.

This calls for administrators who can effectively work with and influence directions among faculty and fellow-administrators. Comprehensive in-service development, frequent explorations of new avenues in administration and instruction are among the possibilities. Enlarging the vision of college personnel from immediate and specific responsibilities to greater and more comprehensive tasks would be most helpful. What needs to be done on a larger scale, such as developing a potent and effective educational environment, requires leadership with vision and with the skills to implement that vision.

Also called for here is the willingness of faculty and administrators to voluntarily release privileges and favors which heretofore excluded students. Again, this calls for leadership who can influence faculty to move from the ivory towers to the main campus and be willing to be subject to the same expectations imposed on students

4. The data implied that residence halls need to move beyond the traditional purposes of complementing academic and educational experiences. This calls for a new look at the purposes and functions of campus residence halls and programs. Planning and development of residence halls should involve much more than the greatest number of sleeping spaces at the least cost. It calls for developmental engineers whose abilities in identifying student needs can be translated into physical and administrative structures so as to facilitate needs achievement by students in residence halls. This also calls for the selection of trained professional and paraprofessional staff with skills in facilitating the development of the residents and who are willing and able to systematically work with students in identifying and meeting their developmental needs.

5. Not only should the model institution pay attention to students, but that attention should encompass the whole campus environment. The affective and psychomotor domains of students need attention as well as that of the cognitive. This calls for deliberate attempts to educate faculty and administrators to the needs of the whole student, and to show how the absence of meeting affective and psychomotor needs adversely affects institutional attempts to meet cognitive needs.

Limiting our activity to the transmission of information about student needs to the faculty and administration is insufficient as in-service programming in student development and in strategies for meeting the needs of students would appear necessary also. In addition, it appears extremely important that academic engineering be implemented for the purposes of (1) meeting specific educational tasks, (2) evaluating performance along developmental guidelines, and (3) developing goals according to the interests and needs of students.

6. A number of implications can be drawn relative to differences between the outlook of male and female student personnel workers. Males appear to prefer the more traditional structures and approaches to higher education while females appear more liberal and open to the non-traditional.

These differences of position between the sexes, which frequently appear in the findings, would seemingly call for chief student personnel administrators to give considerable attention to hiring women in positions of leadership. Especially would this be appropriate if creativity, innovations, and new directions in programming are important. A word of caution, however, appears in order at this point. Since males have dominated student affairs administration throughout the years, and since females are only now emerging to positions of major leadership, perhaps it is too early to tell if the differences found are due to sex or to holding positions of power and influence. If it is the latter, then the differences observed are not so

much due to sexual differences as they are to behavioral and attitudinal molding influences of the system within which we function.

Perhaps a more comprehensive action than hiring more women alone is in order. Comprehensive staff development programs need to be implemented in colleges and universities to insure that those who serve in positions of leadership are acquainted with what is new, innovative, creative, and working in their respective areas of responsibility.

7. Younger student affairs professionals seem to be more non-traditional in their approaches to college life than is true of older professionals. Attention to development of the affective domain of the student, new methods of academic evaluation, unlimited residence hall visitation, and residence hall occupancy based on students' wishes appear to be more acceptable and desirable to younger professionals than to their elders in the field. After a number of years, of course, the younger professionals become the older professionals and in turn their younger colleagues may be identified as the more open-minded and non-traditional. Again, this speaks to the apparent molding influence of the system and uncovers the need for comprehensive in-service training programs for student affairs professionals. This also calls for institutions with student personnel preparation programs to develop continuing education programs for those in the field. The basic purpose would be to up-date information and research findings, examine new approaches, and develop necessary skills in student affairs work.

8. The data also implied that trained administrators are often more traditional in their approach to the affairs of the academic community than are those with training in counseling. This difference speaks to those who have responsibility for student personnel preparation programs. Counseling is a very important aspect of student personnel training. Since the data reveals that those with training in counseling are more student development oriented than those without similar training, it behooves those who are in positions of leadership to spurn those voices who would have emphasis upon counseling either diminished or excluded. The findings also imply that those in positions of leadership should "lobby" for its inclusions in more of the programs in which administration and programming are the only major emphases. Probably an important rule of thumb here is not to let either counseling or administration become totally dominant in programs of professional preparation.

9. The findings in this study imply that the more formal academic training student affairs workers possess, the greater the tendency is to be open-minded and non-traditional in outlook. These findings speak to those who are involved in student personnel preparation programs also. Even though the job market is full of higher degree candidates who have difficulty finding employment, there remains the need for student personnel professionals to be as adequately prepared as possible. Additional training is needed beyond the master's level program. Perhaps offering only specialist's and doctor's degrees in student personnel would be in the best interests of student development for the years ahead.

10. The data frequently implied that on a continuum from traditional to non-traditional, those primarily identified with ACPA would be on the non-traditional end and those with NAWDAC would be somewhere in between. It is readily apparent that these differences in outlook speak to the leadership as well as the membership in professional associations. Perhaps there exists a need for the professional student personnel associations to get together, even merging the associations, for purposes of mutual understanding, learning, and communication. This would provide for a

greater opportunity for the exchange of ideas, the learning of new skills, and the assimilation of what appears to be differences in approaches to student personnel work. Such could only serve to strengthen the profession in its efforts to effect the direction and functions of colleges and universities.